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RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 5345  
RUACAAA/COMUSKOREA INTEL SEOUL KOR PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/COMUSKOREA J5 SEOUL KOR PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/COMUSFK SEOUL KOR PRIORITY  
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/11/2019  
TAGS: [PINS](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [KS](#) [KN](#) [JA](#)  
SUBJECT: ROKG UNDERTAKING INVESTIGATION OF INTELLIGENCE LEAK

REF: A. STATE 11328  
[1](#)B. SEOUL 00216

Classified By: DCM Bill Stanton. Reasons 1.4(b/d)

[1](#)1. (S/NF) SUMMARY: The ROKG took USG concerns about the leak of intelligence pertaining to North Korean missile movements "very seriously," ROK Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Yong-joon told the DCM on February 11, and was initiating an investigation to find its source. The leakage was not the result of any policy decision; it was a "personal action ... unauthorized by the government." DFM Lee hoped the matter would not impact U.S.-ROK intelligence cooperation and asked if it would be raised by Secretary Clinton during her visit to Seoul next week. The ROKG had asked Moscow and Beijing to urge Pyongyang to reduce inter-Korean tensions. End Summary.

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Leak Investigation Initiated  
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[1](#)2. (S/NF) ROK Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Yong-joon informed the DCM on February 11 of steps the ROKG was taking in response to the refTel demarche on intelligence leaks, delivered February 9. USG concerns had been conveyed throughout the government, DFM Lee said, emphasizing that the ROKG was taking the matter very seriously. Someone within the government had released the information in question, possibly because reports had already appeared in the Japanese media. This "personal action" was unacceptable and totally "unauthorized by the government." In view of the seriousness of the infraction, the ROKG had initiated what would be a thorough investigation of the matter and punish the person responsible once found, Lee stated, adding that he was confident the perpetrator would be discovered.

[1](#)3. (S/NF) The leakage was not the result of any policy decision by the ROKG or its agencies, Lee continued. The government would take strong measures to prevent a recurrence. Lee expressed hope that the incident would not affect intelligence cooperation with the U.S. and asked if the matter would be raised by the Secretary during her upcoming visit to Seoul. The DCM said it was possible she would, but that would be up to the Secretary. Lee further noted the "tough language" of the demarche, to which the DCM responded that it reflected the strength of U.S. concern about the issue.

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Conveying Messages to Pyongyang through Moscow and Beijing  
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14. (S/NF) The ROKG had asked both the Russian and Chinese Foreign Ministries to urge the DPRK to take steps to reduce Korean Peninsula tensions, DFM Lee said. As usual, there had been no clear feedback from Beijing. The DCM noted that Russian Ambassador to the ROK Gleb Ivashentsov had, unusually, called on Ambassador Stephens to express his unease with the inter-Korean standoff.  
STEPHENS